

REMARKS

Claims 40, 43 and 46-79 are pending in the application. Claims 40, 43, 46, 51, 59, 60, 62, 67, 71, 76, and 77 have been cancelled; claims 47-50, 52-58, 61, 63-66, 68-70, 72-75, and 78-79 have been amended. The Examiner rejected claims 47-49, 52, 55-57, 60, 63-66, 68-69, 72-75 and 77-78 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In addition, the Examiner rejected claims 40, 43 and 46 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,108,091 to Pecen et al. (“Pecen”). The Examiner further rejected claims 51, 54, 59, 62, 67, 71, 76 and 79 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pecen in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,179,709 to Redeker et al. (“Redeker”). Finally, the Examiner indicated that claims 50, 53, 55, 58 and 61 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims; and claims 47-49, 52, 56-57, 50, 63-66, 68-69, 72-76 and 77-78 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 36 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The present amendment conforms the claims with what the Examiner indicated to be allowable. Each of independent base claims 40, 43, 46 and 71 have been canceled as well as claims 51, 59, 60, 62, 67, 76 and 79. The limitations of the former base claims 40, 43, 46 and 71 have been recited in combination with the elements of each of the formerly dependent claims 47, 55, 63 and 72, respectively, making these amended claims the new base claims. In addition the limitations of former independent claim 40 has been added to formerly dependent claim 52 making an additional base claim. Moreover, the amended material to the base claims in conjunction with the other amended text in claims 47-50, 52-58, 61 63-66, 68-70, 72-75 and 77-79 provide appropriate antecedent basis for the elements recited in this group of claims.

Accordingly all of the claims remaining in the application are now clearly allowable. Favorable consideration and a timely Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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